



Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.gov

www.iowanaturestore.com

Editor: Mick Klemesrud, 515/281-8653
mick.klemesrud@dnr.state.ia.us

Feb. 6, 2007

1. Committee Exploring Sustainable Funding for Natural Resources to Meet Feb. 9
2. Two Teenagers Guilty of Shooting Bald Eagle
3. Omission Causes Confusion for Mississippi River Walleye Anglers [Correction to the daily bag and possession limit for walleye, sauger and saugeye on the Mississippi River]
4. Nine More Communities Join River Clean-up Effort
5. Volunteers Offered Snow Day Opportunities
6. Evergreen Up Your Landscape
7. Beware of the Garlic Mustard! (Electronic photo available)

COMMITTEE EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR NATURAL RESOURCES TO MEET FEB. 9

WEST DES MOINES - An advisory committee directed by the Iowa Legislature to explore sustainable funding for Iowa's natural resources will conduct a meeting at 10 a.m., February 9, at the Iowa Farm Bureau headquarters, 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines. The meeting is scheduled for two hours and is open to the public.

The committee has submitted its preliminary report to Iowa Governor Chet Culver, and the legislature. The committee will consider any details or additions necessary for a final report during the meeting.

Legislation during the 2006 session called for creation of the committee. Specifically, the committee was directed to submit a report to the governor and the general assembly by January 10, 2007. The now-submitted preliminary report contains the following:

- Information on what surrounding states have done to provide sustainable funding for natural resource conservation.
- Outline of a conservation funding initiative agreed upon by the advisory committee.

- Outline of the amount of revenue needed and what would be accomplished if the conservation funding initiative is implemented.
- Analysis of Iowa's citizens' willingness to pay for identified conservation funding initiative.

The committee is chaired by the Department of Natural Resources. Other committee representatives include members of both houses and both political parties of the Iowa Legislature, Conservation Districts of Iowa, Ducks Unlimited, Farmers Union, Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards, Iowa Environmental Council, Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Iowa Renewable Fuels Association, Izaak Walton League of Iowa, Pheasants Forever, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy.

Vistors are asked to to enter the Farm Bureau building through its east door and sign the security register.

For additional information, contact Doug Harr, DNR staff assistant to committee, at 515-275-4815, or email doug.harr@dnr.state.ia.us.

###

TWO TEENAGERS GUILTY OF SHOOTING BALD EAGLE

SABULA — Two teenagers pleaded guilty Monday to shooting and killing a bald eagle with a pellet gun near Sabula in December.

Dillon J. Stiles, 17, of Bryant, was ordered to pay \$182 in fines and court costs, plus a \$1,000 civil penalty and forfeited his air rifle. Michael D. Marburger, 16, of Sabula, was ordered to pay \$182 in fines and court costs.

Stiles shot the bald eagle out of a tree near the South Sabula Beach on Dec. 23, while with Marburger. One of the feet was cut off of the eagle which was allegedly in Marburger's possession for a couple of weeks until being disposed. The eagle foot was eventually recovered by DNR conservation officers in Sabula.

For more information, contact DNR Conservation Officer Jeff Harrison at 563-543-5259.

###

[This release includes a correction to the daily bag and possession limit for walleye, sauger and saugeye on the Mississippi River.]

OMISSION CAUSES CONFUSION FOR MISSISSIPPI RIVER WALLEYE ANGLERS

DES MOINES – Walleye anglers will be required to adhere to a slot limit on a portion of the Mississippi River despite an omission recently discovered in the 2007 Iowa Fishing Regulations brochure.

The brochure stated “... all walleye from 20 to 27 inches caught from Lock and Dam 12 to the Missouri state line, must be immediately released alive, and, no more than one walleye above 27 inches may be taken per day on these pools.” However, state officials noted the wording should have read “from Lock and Dam 11 to the Missouri state line,” which would include pool 12.

“Basically, the text inadvertently and mistakenly omitted pool 12 from the wording, a 26-mile river pool from Dubuque to Bellevue,” said Iowa DNR Fisheries Bureau chief Marion Conover. “However, we still intend to enforce the slot limit on that stretch of the river.”

The decision to adhere to the regulation was based partly on a long-standing agreement with Mississippi River border-states Wisconsin and Illinois, who said they would enforce the rule on their sides of the river. To avoid confusion among anglers, Iowa officials agreed to do the same.

DNR officials will be providing fishing license vendors in the affected area with additional educational materials to note the omission and remind anglers of the regulation.

The daily bag and possession limits on the Mississippi River are an aggregate six and 12 walleye, saugeye, and/or saugeye, respectively.

For more information, contact Alan Foster at 515-281-8874.

###

NINE MORE COMMUNITIES JOIN RIVER CLEANUP EFFORT

DES MOINES — Volunteers from nine Iowa communities have an extra hand helping in their local cleanup efforts through mini-grants from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The mini-grants, each potentially worth up to \$1,000, were awarded by the CLEAR (Community Leaders Enhancing Area River) mini-grant program and will be put toward local events dedicated to cleaning up small bodies of water. Volunteer efforts are scheduled to begin in April and continue until mid-August. All grant funding has been

made possible by REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection), a resource investment and allocation program administered by the Iowa DNR.

Through the CLEAR mini-grant program, a total of 18 groups and individuals were chosen for 2006. Previous grants have made cleanup events possible in communities including: Des Moines, Dixon, Elkader, Oskaloosa, Carter Lake, Sioux City, Steamboat Rock, Eldora, Council Bluffs and Boone.

All cleanups are being performed as part of a statewide initiative with IOWATER, a volunteer water monitoring program for the Iowa DNR. Visit www.iowater.net for more information on these cleanup efforts and how you can get involved.

Final Round Winners:

- Riverbend Middle School's Iowa River (Iowa Falls)
- 2007 Big Rock Volga River Cleanup (Fayette)
- Muddy Creek Watershed Coalition Cleanup Days (Coralville)
- Boone River Cleanup (Webster City)
- Minding the Maquoketa (Maquoketa)
- Middle Raccoon River Cleanup: Riverside Park-Whiterock (Carroll)
- West Fork Des Moines River Cleanup (Ruthven)
- Franklin County Iowa River Cleanup Project (Hampton)
- Jones County - Keeping our Rivers Clean Project (Center Junction)

For more information, contact Brandon Harland at (515) 281-3150 or at brandon.harland@dnr.state.ia.us.

###

VOLUNTEERS OFFERED SNOW DAY OPPORTUNITIES

DES MOINES — Although the snow has officially blanketed the ground, there are still plenty of ways to help improve Iowa's natural resources with new volunteer opportunities now available through the Keepers of the Land Volunteer Program at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

- **Bird Nest Monitoring and Frog and Toad Surveying:** DNR officials are preparing for volunteers to help with bird nest monitoring surveys and frog and toad surveys that will take place in the spring, by offering training workshops throughout the state during February and March. For more information, contact Stephanie Shepherd at (515) 432-2823 ext. 102.
- **Habitat Improvement Opportunity:** DNR officials are looking for volunteers to help with brush control tasks at the Bob Pyle Marsh. This opportunity is continuing until February 28. For more information, contact Steve Espeland at (515) 432-2545.

- **Construction Opportunity:** Officials at Green Valley State Park are looking for volunteers to help with various construction projects around the park. This opportunity starts immediately and is ongoing. For more information, contact Greg Haley at (641) 782-5131.
- **Construction Opportunity:** Officials at Wildcat Den State Park and the Fairport Recreation Area are looking for volunteers to help with various construction projects. This opportunity starts immediately and is ongoing. For more information, contact Jim Ohl at (563) 263-4337.
- **Playground Games Construction:** Officials at Big Creek State Park are looking for volunteers to construct replacement tic-tac-toe blocks and wooden xylophone mallets for the playground. This opportunity starts immediately and is ongoing. For more information, contact Kim Olofson at (515) 984-6473.
- **Customer Service Opportunity:** Officials at the Wallace State Office Building are looking for volunteers to help with document filing. This opportunity begins immediately and is ongoing until the project is completed. For more information contact Marj Robbins at (515) 281-6579.

Visit the Keepers of the Land website at www.keepersoftheland.org for information on these and more volunteer opportunities. For more information, contact Merry Rankin at (515) 281-0878 or at Merry.Rankin@dnr.state.ia.us.

###

EVERGREEN UP YOUR LANDSCAPE

AMES - Adapted pines, spruces, firs and even junipers provide a little green color to Iowa's long and brown winter landscape. Evergreens, or more appropriately "conifers" for cone bearing, make the landscape green and provide critical winter wildlife habitat, offer protection from cold winds and increase property values.

To select the right conifer for the landscape, first, keep in mind that except for bald cypress, most conifers adapted to Iowa's climate and soils like dry, well-drained sites. Second, most conifers though small in the beginning, grow large and need at least 15 to 25 feet of space from the home, other trees and overhead power lines. Finally, during their first year, conifers need lots of TLC with regular watering right up to the time that the ground freezes for the roots to take hold.

Pines adapted well to Iowa include the native white pine, its long-needled cousin, the red pine and short needled cousin, the jack pine. Scotch pine, Iowa's favorite Christmas tree, generally has a short life span of 25 to 30 years.

Spruces possess dense pyramidal shapes and are great for windbreaks and shelterbelts as well as provide dense nest and hiding cover for wildlife. Iowa foresters recommend adapted Norway and white spruce for conservation plantings and Black Hills

spruce for ornamental sites. Foresters no longer recommend Colorado blue spruce due to needle blight diseases that shorten its life span.

Junipers or cedars, such as the native red cedar, possess scale-like needles and reach 25 to 30 feet tall on a variety of soils. Although these trees grow wild in many parts of the state, red cedar is wonderful shelterbelt tree due to its dense foliage.

Contact the State Forest Nursery to discuss “ever greening,” at 1-800-865-2477. Evergreen seedlings are available for \$25 to \$30 per 100 plants with a minimum order of 500 plants, or choose a “create-a-packet” containing up to four different species for a total of 200 plants for \$90. The State Forest Nursery currently has a good supply of 8 to 24-inch bare root conifers available for spring delivery.

Orders are accepted by phone or on-line at www.iowadnr.com/forestry/. Visa and MasterCard are accepted. Go to www.iowatreeplanting.com for local nursery and garden centers that offer conifers adapted to specific landscapes.

###

(Electronic photo available)

Coming to a Woods Near You....

BEWARE OF THE GARLIC MUSTARD!

The title sounds like an old movie cliché, but it’s not far from the truth once you’ve seen the impact garlic mustard, *Alliaria petiolata*, can have on a *once* pristine woodland. In this case, garlic mustard is the exotic monster – it is not a native of North America and it has the potential to colonize and displace most of the native understory flora in Iowa woodlands. Today, it has become a serious problem, particularly in parts of eastern Iowa.

Since its discovery in 1868 Long Island, NY, garlic mustard has spread to 30 eastern and Midwestern states, three Canadian provinces and is reported as far west as Washington and British Columbia.

Garlic mustard can spread rapidly. Small plant colonies frequently develop along animal and human trails, leading experts to believe the seeds are carried on animal fur, in the cuffs of pants and on the tires of off-road vehicles. From these new colonies, the seeds then disperse in all directions. Within a few years the plants can infest entire woodlands. Disturbances from timber harvest operations or high populations of white-tail deer can dramatically increase its rate of spread. Garlic mustard is not picky about where it grows; it does well in rich and poor soils, partial to deep shade, bottomlands and rocky hillsides. But it tends to shy from full sunlight.

Identification of garlic mustard is relatively easy. The plant is biennial. It germinates from a seed in the spring and produces a whorl of basal leaves that look very

similar to the plant called Creeping Charlie, or ground ivy. A good way to identify garlic mustard is by smell. A crushed leaf will produce the unmistakable odor of garlic.

Plants that survive into the second year will produce a flower stalk in the spring. The flowers are rather indistinct, with four white petals per flower and rather small at six to seven millimeters in diameter. The flower stalk will reach about three feet in height. From these flowers grow long, narrow seed pods similar to those of other species in the mustard family. The seeds mature quickly and one stalk can produce hundreds of seeds. The seeds are “spring loaded” and the slightest brush of the plant will send them flying several feet in every direction. This is its primary mode of seed dispersal. First year seedlings stay green throughout the winter and will grow the instant warm weather arrives. Deer and other herbivores shy away from eating this plant. In North America, it has no important fungi, virus or insect enemies.

Garlic mustard is a problem and should not be underestimated. A number of important natural areas in northeast Iowa have been severely impacted. Several years ago it would be hard to find garlic mustard in Backbone State Park, near Dundee. Today it is abundant. It has also become prolific at the Mine’s of Spain Recreation Area, near Dubuque. Few, if any, native plants can be found where it grows in dense stands.

“The problem has gotten beyond pulling,” said Jerry Selby, director of science and stewardship for The Nature Conservancy in Iowa. Selby is referring to the garlic mustard problem at Retz Memorial Forest, a TNC owned woodland in northeast Iowa. Over the past few years, Selby has organized garlic mustard pulling parties where 10 to 20 volunteers dedicate a day to pulling this exotic weed in the preserve. Their efforts should be applauded, but garlic mustard is still abundant and continues to spread through the preserve.

Effigy Mounds National Monument, near Marquette, is one of the Midwest’s premiere natural areas. Thousands of visitors stop each year to view the monument’s ancient effigy and burial mounds. The monument also boasts pristine woodlands and spectacular vistas of the Mississippi bluffs. Rodney Rovang is the monument’s natural resource manager. He is responsible for protecting and maintaining the park’s natural areas and restoring them to their historic and pristine condition. He and his crew spend considerable amounts of time and resources every year locating and eradicating exotic/invasive species like European buckthorn and Asian honeysuckles. Their greatest problem right now is with the constant influx of seed from adjacent properties. Though park crews can have a big impact on the quality of flora within the park, there is little they can do to control the abundance of exotic/invasive plants growing outside the park. As a result, they face a never-ending battle to locate and eradicate new infestations.

Pulling is the favored method for controlling garlic mustard at the Effigy Mounds National Monument. Pulled plants need to be carried out and burned, otherwise a pulled plant, lying on the ground, can actually continue maturing and still develop viable seed. A propane torch has become a popular tool for killing the plants. The heat from the flame quickly kills the plants. Native plants are incidentally burned in the process, but

they usually recover since most are perennials and are naturally adapted to fire. Garlic mustard, being a biennial, has to start over from seed. With persistent pulling and burning, the garlic mustard seed bank in the soil will eventually become exhausted. Obviously, using fire can be dangerous. High moisture conditions must be present before burning becomes an alternative.

Herbicides can also be used to kill garlic mustard. The problem with herbicides is it kills non-target species as well. Herbicide treatments for garlic mustard should be timed to early spring or late fall, when most other plant species are dormant. Remember garlic mustard is evergreen, therefore, it will take up herbicides effectively on warm days in late November through early December, and again in early March.

Researchers are looking into biological control methods. The hope is to isolate a natural disease or insect pest that will target the garlic mustard and leave other species undisturbed. In the meanwhile, to help reduce its spread, use some practical measures. First, learn to identify this species so that you can alert others to its presence. Remember, it looks somewhat like Creeping Charlie and if you crush a leaf it will smell like garlic. After traveling in the woods, check your clothes especially pant cuffs for any seeds. Clean your boots and shoes before you leave an area of infestation or before entering areas unexposed by the plant.

A garlic mustard infestation can cause dramatic changes to woodlands. Regeneration of woody species and the overall species richness can both rapidly decline once garlic mustard has established itself. As the old saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

###